

To: Nicholas Greif[nicholas.greif@lacity.org]
From: Michael Woo
Sent: Wed 11/18/2020 9:54:12 PM
Subject: Fwd:
Received: Wed 11/18/2020 9:54:24 PM

Nick:

Got your text message. Yes, I'm available to fill in tomorrow. Nithya sent an email message this morning asking me to give her a call. Below is the email message that I sent her yesterday in response to her request for advice or guidance. I will give her a call after another call I have which is about to start.

Best regards,
Michael

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Michael Woo <mwoo.city@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Nov 17, 2020 at 3:47 PM
Subject: Re:
To: Nithya V. Raman <nraman@gmail.com>

Nithya:

I can just imagine the inundation of your email and text inboxes and am sorry to add to the burden.

Responding to your request for advice or guiding principles for selection of an appointee to the Redistricting Commission, here are some thoughts:

- The redistricting process is about much more than the drawing of lines. The process will define the constituency that you will be representing which could turn out to be very different than the district that elected you. Citywide, the redistricting will directly affect the allocation of City resources (and which parts of the City get better or worse service and more or fewer resources).
- You need to start the process by identifying and ordering your redistricting priorities: which parts or features of your district are important to keep, which parts or features of your district would you be willing to give up.
- Because political self-interest is the dominating factor in redistricting, there is considerable risk of treachery. You can't really trust any of the other participants unless you understand their self-interest. Equity and justice are typically not factors in redistricting except to the extent that Federal civil rights statutes protect representation of certain "classes."
- You need to find allies among the other Councilmembers (especially the Council President and the Councilmember who chairs or will chair a Redistricting Committee). Not sure whether the Council President has appointed a Councilmember to chair a Redistricting Committee.
- Demographic data is the coin of the redistricting process. Typically, the Council President and/or the Councilmember who chairs the Council Redistricting Committee control the selection of redistricting consultants including data specialists. Not sure how open or transparent the data analysis and line-drawing will be. You may need to pay for your own data analyst or consultant(s) who will be accountable to you.
- There probably will be formal rules restricting *ex parte* communication between the Councilmember and her designee for the Redistricting Commission. Therefore, you need to choose an appointee who will clearly understand your redistricting priorities from the outset and who can function effectively within the Redistricting Commission without a lot of private feedback from or interaction with you.

The first meeting of the Redistricting Commission (to be conducted virtually) is set for this Thursday, November 19, from 3:00 - 5:00 pm. It would be best for you to have your appointee in place for the first meeting.

Please let me know if you have any further questions. Good luck.

Best regards,
Michael Woo

On Mon, Nov 16, 2020 at 3:08 PM Nithya V. Raman <nraman@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Michael,

Thank you for reaching out. I apologize for the slow response to this email. I am digging myself out of quite a large hole in terms of incoming emails and texts that have come in during the last 10 days, especially to my personal email address - this email got buried. I'll reach out to David Ryu's office to follow up on next steps.

I have read about some of the challenges you faced with redistricting and your district. Do you have advice or guiding principles that I should be thinking about as I make a selection of an appointee on the commission? I came into this campaign with a focus on equity and justice, and would like to ensure that any redistricting of the councils was in line with moving LA governance more in that direction!

Warmly,
Nithya

On Sun, Nov 8, 2020 at 5:14 PM Michael Woo <mwoo.city@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Councilmember-Elect Raman:

Congratulations on your victory in the City Council election.

I am writing to inform you that I will resign from the City Redistricting Commission to which Councilmember Ryu appointed me. The first meeting of the Commission is scheduled for November 19. Although you will not be officially sworn in by that date, it is entirely reasonable for you to appoint your own designee to the Commission.

Based upon my own experience especially in the 1986 special redistricting that twice radically shifted the lines of my district, the work of redrawing Council District lines can be very complicated and fraught with challenges. After I defeated an incumbent Councilmember, the Council majority chose to achieve the stated goal of adding a new "Hispanic-majority" district by eliminating the district from which I had been elected. Were it not for a Mayoral veto and the unexpected demise of one of the Councilmembers, I would have ended up representing a constituency that diverged sharply from the electorate that brought me into public office. Please feel free to let me know if you have any questions about my own experience in redistricting.

If you have more questions about the Redistricting Commission in general, please contact John Wickham in the Chief Legislative Analyst's Office whom I am copying on this email message.

Best of luck to you in getting off to a good start serving the people of CD4.

Sincerely,
Michael Woo